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DESERT CHIEF/STON
III-24 to III-30

Mr. & Mrs. Mark S. D'Elia
5157 Bronson Drive
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III-30

ANSWERED OCT 16 1991

5157 Bronson Drive

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10 Oct. 91

Bill Getz, Publisher

The Redwood Press

P.O. Box 412

Burlingame, Ca. 94011-0412

Dear Col. Getz,

I'm an Air Force Reservist from Niagara Falls, N.Y. I am an Electro-Environmental mechanic in the 914 Tactical Airlift Group Consolidated Aircraft Maint. Squadron. We fly G-130's at the Niagara Falls Int'l Airport. We were activated for Operation Desert Shield/Storm and served in the 1650th Tac. Airlift Wing Provisional at Mirage Air Base, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates from 8 Oct 90 to 7 Apr 91.

I wrote the song on an electric guitar made from miscellaneous pieces I brought with me in a last minute attempt to fill my time in the desert. A friend gave me the wooden body that had been gutted of all the electrics, etc. saying "here, take it, maybe you can make it work!" I fixed it in Sharjah using a clip-in type acoustic guitar pickup, made a pick guard from aircraft aluminum sheet metal, and replaced the missing bridge with one I filed from a solid piece of steel. I spent about a week making the parts at work between airplane jobs. When I was finished I was able to play it through the AUX channel on my portable stereo radio, or thru the headphones. For a while it was the best guitar on the base.

I wrote the song about late October or Early November. It's the first song I ever wrote. I've been playing the guitar since 1965 (age 13) when I was inspired by the Beatles. One evening we were sitting around on the front porch of our tent and one of my friends showed me a poem that he had written about the war. I thought I could do better than that so I came up with a few lines. Then I started playing it with guitar. I wrote most of the verses walking to and from the hangar where

I worked. I called it the Insane Hussein Blues. It has a very simple heavy Blues beat and just two chords (E and A). The closest thing I've heard to it is Bad to the Bone by George Thorogood. My wife says musically it's dull and boring so I think it captures the feeling there perfectly.

Shortly after I wrote it, I recorded it and sent the tape and lyrics home to my family. Then in December three local T.V. stations arrived at our base to cover the 914th in Desert Shield. Two of them filmed me playing my song and aired it back in Western New York. They also took an audio tape back to a local radio station and it was played several times. I taped that version one night in our parts store room, accompanied by my friend playing drums on a cardboard box to give it a beat. (I have copies of the Audio and Video tapes.)

Probably the highest point was when I played the song at a Talent Show we put on Christmas Eve outside, in front of our Chow Hall Tent for 300 or 400 people. Right after that I went to our Chappel Tent and played (Christmas music) for our Christmas Eve Midnight Mass. I was also playing the same guitar in a Folk Mass with three or four other Reservists for the entire six months we were there. We even accompanied the (2 star) Chaplain General of the Air Force for one Mass.

Later on when the War was almost over, a local Buffalo N.Y. band contacted me. They had heard my song on the T.V. and wanted to record their version of it. I gave them my permission and they did record a very nice version of it but the War ended and the public appeal faded away so it was never released.

I hope you can use my song in your book and I hope you have enjoyed reading all this because I'm sure that it will never happen to me again.

Thank you,

Mark S. D'Elia

Mark S. D'Elia Tsgt. USAF Reserve

THE INSANE HUSSEIN BLUES (I'M DESERT BOUND)

by

Mark S. D'Elia

WELL MY COUNTRY CALLED ME, FROM THE HIGHEST COMMAND
SENT ME AND MY FRIENDS TO THIS HOT DESERT LAND
NOW WE'RE LIVING IN TENTS, AND WE'RE STUCK IN THE SAND
SAY I'M DESERT BOUND, I SAY I'M DESERT BOUND

WITH A HIGH IN THE HUNDREDS, AND A LOW IN YOUR HEART,
TOOK ME AND MY FAMILY, AND THEY TORE US APART.
BUT I'M GONNA SURVIVE THIS, KNEW I WOULD FROM THE START
ALTHOUGH I'M DESERT BOUND, THOUGH I'M DESERT BOUND

WELL THE MINUTES ARE HOURS, AND THE HOURS ARE DAYS.
YOU KNOW TIME PASSES SO SLOW, WHEN YOU'RE LIVING THIS WAY
AND NINE THOUSAND MILES IS SO FAR AWAY
WHEN YOU'RE DESERT BOUND, WHEN YOU'RE DESERT BOUND

- SOLO -

HE'S THE CAUSE OF MY PROBLEM, HE IS SADDAM HUSSEIN
CAUSES DEATH AND DESTRUCTION, CAUSES SORROW AND PAIN
BUT AS LONG AS HE'S OUT THERE, GUESS I'M GONNA REMAIN
SO I'M STILL DESERT BOUND, STILL DESERT BOUND

WHEN THE FIGHTING IS OVER, OR WHEN I'VE PAID MY DUES
I'LL BE PACKING MY BAGS, KICK THE SAND FROM MY SHOES
I'LL BE SMILING AND LAUGHING, I CAN GO WHERE I CHOOSE
SO I'LL BE HOMEWARD BOUND, I'LL SEE YOU AROUND.